

Growth Areas

VISION STATEMENT

The remaining developable capacity of the city of Scottsdale will be fulfilled through a rational, managed, and timely process that is the result of public participation and endorsement. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve will be acquired and managed for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The many diverse neighborhoods and lifestyles that comprise the unique fabric and character of Scottsdale will be protected and enhanced, and a sense of community, shared among residents across the city, will be both obvious and admired. The composition and strength of the community's economy will assure healthy and prosperous levels of employment, income, and working environment for both local and commuting labor forces. Intermodal transportation systems will be established and operated to improve the efficient movement of people and goods to, from, and within the community within acceptable and affordable physical and environmental standards.

Introduction

Since 1967, the city of Scottsdale has diligently prepared, adopted, implemented and updated its General Plan as a guide for anticipating, and directing the internal and external economic, physical, social and political influences affecting growth of the community. The General Plan has been a guide for the development of both private and public lands located within the city. Scottsdale imposes stringent development regulations and standards on all development that occurs in the community. This practice has resulted in a nationally recognized, high-quality built environment and has contributed to making the city, all the more, a target of opportunity for businesses and families alike.

During the last decade of the 20th Century, the city of Scottsdale underwent the most intense growth period of its history with the development of nearly 38,000 new dwelling units and the resulting inflow of 82,700 new citizens. The absorption and management of an average annual increase in the community's housing stock of 4.5% and an average annual population increase of 5.1%, sustained for 10 years, creates demands on municipal physical and financial resources that can be difficult to confront and satisfy and can be a problem to maintain the quality of lifestyle to which the community's residents and visitors have been accustomed.



During this same period, the Phoenix metropolitan area was the 2nd fastest growing large metropolitan area in the United States. This situation has led to increasing construction and commuter traffic, dust, noise, pollution, and the loss of farm and ranch land and natural open space to the urbanization process. Both long-time residents and newcomers have been exasperated when they perceive that the changes, diminution, and loss of the character and quality of life that originally had attracted them to this desert setting were unacceptable and preventable.

Higher Density Areas Impacts and Opportunities

High density is generally regarded as having a negative impact on the city's infrastructure and services; however, placing higher densities in certain areas, such as downtown, may promote the use of transit, which in turn would mean fewer cars on the road and less pollution in the community. Additionally, some in our community may believe high densities are preferable to sprawling, which can be an inefficient way of distributing services.

Also, during this same period, the citizens of Scottsdale authorized the city to acquire 36,000 acres of land to be preserved as natural open space for all time in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. When the approved open space acquisition program is completed, and all remaining developable capacity of Scottsdale has been developed in accord with the land uses and densities of the Scottsdale General Plan Land Use Element, there will be approximately 280,000 citizens living within the community, and more than 40% of the total land area will be in both natural and recreational open space. The city will have an average of 170 acres of open space per 1,000 households in the city; -an overall population density of 1,500 people per square mile; and an overall residential density of about 1.13 dwelling units per acre, all of which will make Scottsdale one of the least densely developed communities of its size in the United States.

Development that has occurred in Scottsdale cannot be defined, correctly, as 'sprawl.' 'Sprawl' is defined as 'unplanned, haphazard, uncontrolled, unserviced, disconnected development.' Development in Scottsdale has taken place exactly where it was planned according to the Land Use Element of the General Plan, first adopted in 1967 and periodically updated through today. The areas are serviced with all city utilities; major streets, collectors, scenic corridors, parkways; public transportation in areas of concentrated development; equestrian, biking, and hiking trails; parks, playgrounds, aquatic centers, community centers, youth and senior centers, libraries; public safety and crime prevention services and facilities including fire, police, airport safety, and nationally acclaimed flood control systems; and city government and administrative facilities and Citizen Service Centers. Although a valid argument can be made that the extreme growth in Scottsdale

over the last ten years (1990's) has been manageable and, basically, in accord and compliance with the community's adopted General Plan, there can be no denial that there is a strong public perception that the development process and its results have been negative. If public support of the future growth of the city is to be restored, it will be necessary to make a collaborative and more detailed, critical examination and evaluation of the opportunities and constraints affecting the tempo, style and nature of continuing urbanization and the efficiency and character of Scottsdale's neighborhoods. Furthermore, it is important to understand the totality of physical, social, emotional, economic and fiscal impacts on the sense and character of the community, the vision of its residents and visitors, the natural environment within which we must coexist, and the sustainability of all that we value.

The Growth Areas Element approaches growth management from a perspective of identifying those areas of the community that are most appropriate for development focus. Having certain "growth areas" of the community that will best accommodate future growth will allow increased focus on creating or enhancing transportation systems and infrastructure coordinated with development activity. In the "growth areas" the city can concentrate on improvements that will support planned concentration of a variety of uses (mixed uses), such as residential, office, commercial, tourism, and industrial uses. Growth areas are intended to discourage sprawl by focusing new development into targeted areas that are most appropriate for integrating open spaces, natural resources, accommodating a variety of land uses, and oriented to multi-modal (transit, pedestrian, bicycling, as well as autos, etc.) activity. Growth areas are not "urban growth boundaries". Urban growth boundaries are typically specific geographic boundaries within an area that set down outer limits (boundaries) for new development or infrastructure. Growth areas are not prohibitive to new development, but target it to identified areas, and they may not be contiguous to each other.



Scottsdale Values ...

- Continuing growth, development, revitalization, and redevelopment within the city of Scottsdale that embraces the community's stated vision and guiding principles.
- Growth and expansion that is directed and sustained in areas within the city without overtaxing the municipality's existing and planned service systems and physical infrastructure, and without seriously impacting the health, safety, comfort, convenience and general welfare of neighboring residents and guests of the community.
- Meaningful open space as a community amenity, from small neighborhood parks and scenic corridors to the large McDowell Sonoran Preserve.
- The quality, health, and diversity of Scottsdale's economy, supported through continuing programs of retention, enhancement, and community partnership development.
- Management of the finite and renewable environmental, economic, social, and technological resources of the community to ensure their sustainability and availability to serve future needs.
- Multi-modal solutions that will support the diverse movement and circulation requirements of all socioeconomic components of our community in ways that are efficient, affordable, and environmentally compatible.
- The recognition and support of the constitutionally-guaranteed private property rights and opposition to any practice or program that would result in a violation of those rights or the taking of property without due process and equitable resolution.



Goals and Approaches

1. **Direct and sustain growth and expansion in areas of the city that can support a concentration of a variety of uses and are particularly suitable for multimodal transportation and infrastructure expansion and improvements.**
 - Promote infrastructure expansion where it will be most efficient and effective and minimizes adverse impacts outside the identified areas.
 - Identify existing, measurable edges of growth areas and the transitions between adjacent growth areas.
 - Promote the coordination of infrastructure development and upgrade with opportunities for infill development and development activity where it will encourage a mix of uses and support pedestrian and transit activity.
 - Give priority in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to upgrades and improvements that serve identified growth areas.
 - Create techniques that allow for mixed-use activity within designated growth areas.
 - Define policies and implementation strategies designed to:
 - make infrastructure expansion more cost-effective;
 - provide for a rational pattern of land development; and
 - identify and support opportunities for regional connectivity.
2. **Make automobile, transit and other multimodal circulation more efficient.**
 - Encourage physical planning and design techniques that facilitate the access to and use of transit services and pedestrian amenities.
 - Make infrastructure expansion more economical by concentrating it in identified growth areas and coordinating it with development activity.
 - Provide for a rational pattern of land development, coordinated with a multimodal circulation system.
3. **Conserve significant natural resources and open space areas in the growth areas and coordinate their locations to similar areas outside the growth areas.**
 - Achieve meaningful open space as an integral part of activity cores and conserve significant natural resources and open space areas within growth areas.
 - Provide open spaces in designated growth areas that encourage public gathering, enhance aesthetics, preserve viewsheds, and serve as buffers between uses of significantly differing function and intensity.



- 4. Promote the public and private construction of timely and financially sound infrastructure expansion through the use of infrastructure funding and fiscal planning that is coordinated with development activity.**
- 5. Identify legal mandates and policies concerning future growth, development, revitalization, redevelopment, and expansion of public infrastructure and facilities, services and crime prevention within the municipal boundaries.**
- 6. Integrate public (civic) art into the visual character of designated growth areas.**
- 7. Promote development timing that is guided by the adequacy of existing and/or expandable infrastructure, services, and facilities.**
 - Plan and promote the orderly building of infrastructure such as water, sewer, drainage, and transportation facilities.
 - Ensure development approval is related to commitments for the construction of primary water, wastewater, and circulation systems.
 - Focus infrastructure improvements in designated growth areas and contiguous to existing development.
 - Ensure development outside of designated growth areas pays for all related infrastructure improvements.
 - Anticipate the need and secure land for public facilities such as water treatment plants, reservoirs, transportation rights-of-way, parks, libraries, community centers, and other public needs such as police and fire.

Related Plans and Policies:

- Scottsdale's city operating budgets and Capital Improvement Plans
- Departmental Multi-Year Operational and Capital Improvements Master Plans
- Operating Management, Capital Management, Debt Management, Reserve, and Financial Reporting Policies
- Economic Vitality Action Plan 2000-02*
- The Downtown Plan (1984)
- The Southeast Downtown Redevelopment Plan (1993)
- The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan (1994)
- The Los Arcos Redevelopment Plan (1996)
- The Downtown Redevelopment Plan (1997)

*updated annually

Reference:

- Fiscal Impact of Development Study, Tischler & Associates, 1996
- Sustainability Indicators Report
- Economic Trends Supplement, April 2000*

*updated annually

Element Graphic:

- Growth Areas map

